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TOWARD A THEORY OF HOME, SCHOOL, AND COMMUNITY INTERRELATIONS.

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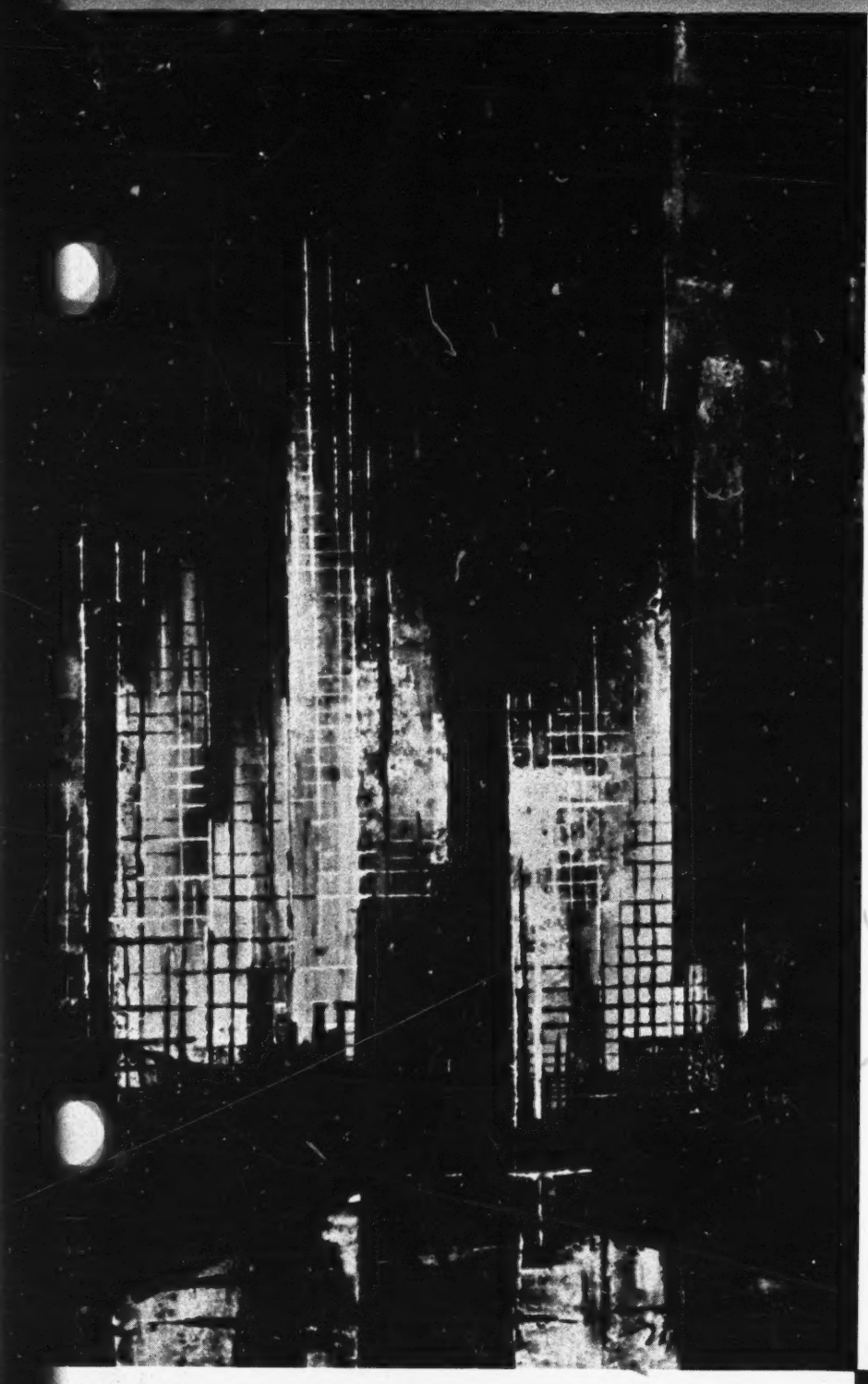
THIS THEORY OF THE COMMUNITY SCHOOL PROGRAM IS PRESENTED THROUGH A DETAILED DISCUSSION OF URBAN TRENDS. THE AUTHORS DESCRIBE THE HISTORICAL PREVALENCE OF THE ECONOMIC AND EDUCATIVE FUNCTIONS OF FAMILIES AND THE EFFECTS OF URBANIZATION ON THOSE FUNCTIONS. PROFOUND INTERPERSONAL ESTRANGEMENT IN MODERN URBAN PATTERNS OF FAMILY LIVING IS DISCUSSED, WITH EMPHASIS ON EFFECT OF SCHOOLS ON THE FAMILIAL, EDUCATIVE RESPONSIBILITY. THE LOCI OF THE TEACHING FUNCTION ARE LISTED AS--(1) THE LEARNER, (2) PEERS, (3) PARENTS, AND (4) THE TEACHER. THIS REPORT ENDS WITH A PLEA FOR THE RESTORATION OF EDUCATION TO COMMUNITY LIFE. THE MOTT PROGRAM IN FLINT, MICHIGAN IS CITED AS A MODEL FOR SCHOOLS AS ROUND-THE-CLOCK CENTERS FOR INTERACTION AND DISCUSSION. THE COMMUNITY SCHOOL THEORY EMPHASIZES COMMUNICATION AND COOPERATION BETWEEN THE SCHOOL AND ITS PATRONS. SCHOOLS ARE USED FOR ADULTS AS WELL AS CHILDREN TO FAMILIARIZE THE COMMUNITY WITH THE STAFF, PURPOSES, PROCEDURES, FACILITIES, PROBLEMS, AND POTENTIALITIES OF THE EDUCATIVE PROCESS. WITH FULL INVOLVEMENT OF SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY, EDUCATION CAN BECOME A MORE EFFECTIVE INSTRUMENT. (PH)



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TOWARD A THEORY OF

HOME, SCHOOL, AND COMMUNITY INTERRELATIONS*

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Introduction

There is little we know with greater certainty about mankind's social background than that ubiquitous forces of expedience and higher purpose have caused humans nearly always to live and learn together in biologically derived aggregations we call families. In every age and almost all the cultures we know of, families have been the universal or clearly dominant elemental units of societal organization. And throughout almost all of their known history, families have served their societies as hubs of economic function--as both the prime producers and consumers of the goods and services of their economies --and as the sole or fundamental instruments of social and economic education. Particularly as the primary agencies of child socialization, or of training in social roles, values, and expectancies, "nuclear"[1] families have held a virtual monopoly.

I. Families' Economic and Educative Functions

This historic prevalence of people in family units is of course no accident; nor are its causes simple. In fact, the enduring importance of families may largely result from the very diversity and versatility of the highly personal services they uniquely have been able to perform for their members. Nevertheless, the mutually dependent categories, "economic" and "educative" (in addition to "progenitive") may, for conceptual purposes, validly be used to describe the most essential of these functions. Patently, both of these

*A paper prepared for discussion in a symposium on "Sociological Applications in Home-School-Community Relations," a Session of the 57th Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association, chaired by H. Y. McClusky, held Sept. 1, 1962, in Washington, D. C.

[1]Parsons, T. and Bales, R.: "Family, Socialization, and Interaction Process." Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1955.

sets of functions--the economic ones and the educative ones which propagate and maintain them--are so germane and of such fundamental importance that no culture could long survive without their being fulfilled.

Economically, families have always performed, in varying ways and degrees, as both producing and consuming units for their economies' goods and services. And educationally, within their circles have always been imparted the attitudes, feelings, and motives (as well as, more obviously, the skills) which are necessary to sustain the production and consumption of goods both universally and within particular cultures. In fact, despite its broad applicability, this fundamental dichotomy between the economic roles of "producer" and "consumer" is sufficiently specific to apply meaningfully to individual personalities and to our own feelings. Of course, it must be if it is acquired through education (i. e., is learned by individuals), and if nuclear families are truly". . . 'factories' which produce human personalities."[2] For example, at the instant we lay down the tools of whatever our remunerative employment and start a series of activities that will soon bring us to our dinner and an evening of leisure, most of us can--if we happen to think of it--very clearly feel the sharp edge which for each of us uniquely differentiates the producing side of our personality, our "out-putting" attitudes, from our consuming side, or "in-taking" attitudes. "Work" and "play" are popular terms for this distinction, even though some might argue that a proper goal of education is their confusion. Thus, no culture--simple or complex--can exist without particular knowledge and skills being possessed and manifested by particular individuals who play the reciprocal economic producer and consumer roles upon which it is based. No matter how little these individuals may comprehend their culture and its pattern of economic organization, each of them is sharply aware of his own productive

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[2] Ibid, p. 16.

and consumptive skills, and is just as sharply aware of the feelings and attitudes which sustain them and their performance. These skills, understandings, attitudes, and feelings, as we said, are learned--they comprise a large part of one's personality; and in almost all times and cultures, until recently, they have been learned almost entirely through the individual's socializing interactions within his own family. Families have been the predominant site of these learnings, because families have also been the loci of most of the economic productive and consumptive activities to which they have been pertinent and in whose presence and exercise they could most efficiently be learned.

II. Effects of Metropolitanization upon Familial Functions

Only recently, in mankind's total tenure, have we experienced an accelerating, widespread relaxation--even rejection, among our most highly industrialized, suburbanized cultures--of some of these age-old familial prerogatives. Though some evidence indicates that even the right or responsibility of child socialization is being relinquished by an increasing number of families, most of us cling to what may often be the illusion that we still perform at least adequately in this area. But the time-honored economic monopoly of the family is usually barely missed, much less mourned, within a generation of its passing; and the supporting educative functions--at least those beyond the essentials of primary socialization--get lost in the blur of daily existence like the proverbial forest concealed by trees. Perhaps the only universal functional bond which remains to bind most metropolitan families together--beyond progenation and the biological nurturance of children--is their convenience as an arrangement for the ultimate distribution and consumption of most of the economy's goods and services. Contemporary industries responsible for the

production of personal shelter, food, clothing, entertainment, communicative facilities, and transportation continue to focus their distributive efforts upon the needs and budgets of consumers grouped in family units. But the dwindling family farm system remains virtually our sole reminder of an economy based on familial or kin-group productivity which within some living memories flourished universally--and in all previous times provided for most of mankind's economic requirements. The relentless, three-hundred year course of the Industrial Revolution, with its procrustean specialization of human labor and factorization of economic producing units, has enforced the massive metropolitanization-then-suburbanization of populations, and the subsequent almost universal estrangement of workers' homesites and worksites. Figure 1 suggests the rapid rate by which, since the early 1800's, the population of the United States has forsaken a predominantly family-centered rural style of living for the extra-familial job-centered life style so typical of (and essential to) urban residence. Whereas in 1820 only seven per cent of our people were urban--none of them living in cities with populations as large as 250,000; by 1920 over half of our nation was urban--with almost twenty per cent living in cities with populations as great as or greater than 250,000. And by 1960 (using the U. S. Census Bureau's 1950 revision of its definition of "urban") nearly <u>seventy per cent</u> of the people of the U. S. lived in urban settings, and twenty-two per cent resided in cities of 250,000 or over. In fact, over eleven per cent of us lived in cities with populations of one million or more persons in 1960! The scope of this paper does not permit a discussion of all the forces which motivated this bloating of urban and metropolitan centers; but it is clear that among cities' most powerful attractions have been the opportunities they uniquely have provided for mass employment in highly centralized factories and offices--the precise arrangement which has produced the aforementioned massive estrangement of men, women, and children's places of work and schooling from their homes.

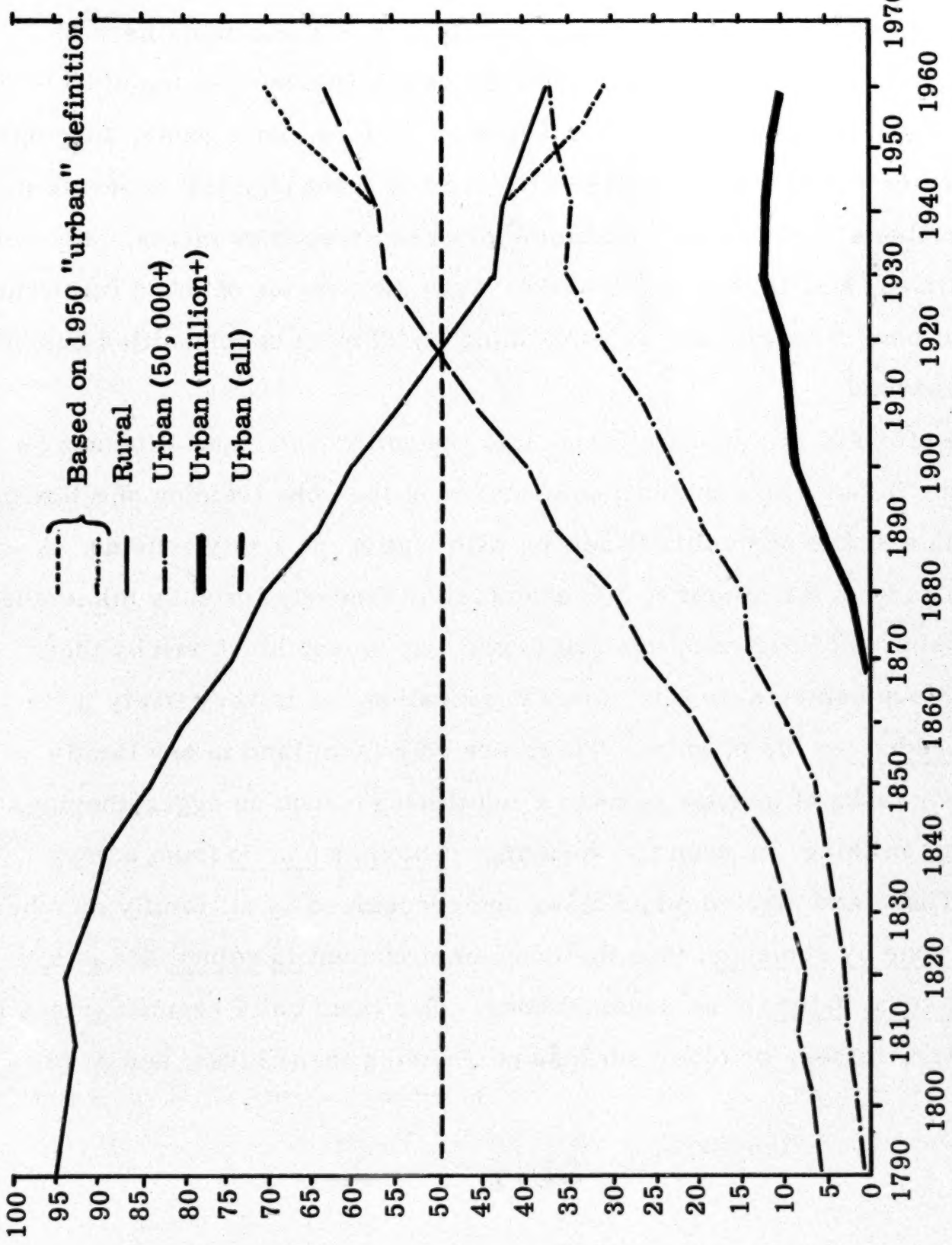

Figure 1: Rates of change, since 1790, in percentage distribution of U. S. population by sizes of place (Source: 1960 U. S. Census, Tables 2, 3, and 7, U. S. Summary, Vol. I, pp. 4, 13.)

Thus, one of family living's two historic economic functions--its provision of elemental units for the production of essential goods and services --is rapidly nearing extinction. And the educative opportunities which were by-products as well as sustainers of this function are also vanishing as a direct consequence. All that remains are families' functions as consuming centers, and the imitative-educative events which are the by-products and sustainers of familial consumption. Furthermore, with the vast urban burgeoning of institutional and commercial consumer services such as restaurants, lodgings, and myriad entertainment purveyors--and the consequent physical separation of family members during many consummatory events such as meals, play-times, discussion-times, bed-times, and the like--even the service of these functions as affectional bond-weavers and as socializing or training opportunities has been seriously weakened.

The effect of this massive economic transition upon education can be demonstrated, in fact, by a modern comparison of the role-training of a boy or girl reared in a stable agricultural setting with that of their city cousins: A little boy born into a farm family, for example, is tenderly loved by his mother and father just as all boys and girls are in one way or another loved by their parents. But supplemental to this parental adoration, he is very likely to be practically <u>needed</u> by his parents. There are on a farm (and in any family industry) many tasks of genuine economic legitimacy--such as egg-gathering, seed-planting, milking, or even fly-spraying--<u>which he can do</u> from a very early age. These and myriad other tasks are recognized by all family members and <u>must be done by someone</u>; thus their accomplishment <u>is valued</u> and <u>is a source of personal value</u> to the accomplisher. Our farm child regularly sees his beloved mother, father, or older siblings performing these tasks; and as he

begins, normally, to identify with these elders he mimics their acts when he can, inevitably achieves success (probably not before being scolded, occasionally, for "slopping the milk," "cracking eggs," "scaring the livestock," etc.), and is affectionately rewarded with praise. The parent or sibling models, too, are deeply rewarded by the prideful feeling of having their performances considered worthy of emulation by a son or younger brother; and they continue to kindle this inner glow by extending and broadening these relationships which are essentially teaching-learning interactions of great emotional power and effectiveness. Thus, our farm boy can hardly avoid learning--in the most natural and efficient way possible--those very attitudes relating to his own achievement of personal worth and security which are necessary to undergird the economy as it actually functions around him. Through normal processes of personality development--of internalizing the significant others[3] in his environment--he tends to incorporate healthy attitudes toward work as well as sound work skills. His own productive accomplishments begin to afford him pleasure so that he will probably be able, for the rest of his life, to derive a basal satisfaction from the elements of remunerative work he has thus learned. It is true that in most cultures of the past such a system of role-training has reinforced a static conformity to traditional practices; but this is because the parents or other models have simply been ignorant of alternative roles or modes of problem-solving. Where the models for socialization are curious or intellectually aggressive, so must the children be.

Consider, now, the contemporary city cousin of our farm boy. Typically, his father is employed so far from home that this child has no opportunity to play at his feet as he works, mime his remunerative activities, nor even to observe him passively while he performs in his major productive roles. Furthermore, this child is not even likely to be awake when his daddy prepares to leave home

[3] Mead, G. H.: Mind, Self, and Society. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1936. Also Parsons, T. and Bales, R., op. cit., pp. 55, 57.

for his distant job. The child may follow his older siblings to school when he's old enough; but even here--in a city of ten thousand or more persons--he probably goes to a school some distance from theirs, has little or no opportunity to play or identify with them or their friends during most of the day, and is forced, therefore, to internalize and reciprocate the values and behaviors of a more or less unstable collection of similarly detached classmates who remain virtual strangers to the members of his and each other's families. Even to consumate <u>these</u> friendships--or to befriend and accept his teacher as a model for social learning--he must overcome some very exceptional barriers to normal inter-communicative sharing and friend-making: Compelled, as he probably is, to sit with mute restraint through most of his school hours, staring at or past his nearest neighbors' napes while ten to thirty of his "pals" are out of sight behind his back, he is far more likely to become either covertly resentful or rebellious to the schoolroom environment, or resignedly withdrawn from it, than to enter happily and spontaneously into friendly interaction with his classmates. He may, of course, have a separate set of after school friends in his own neighborhood. But the larger the city--or multiple dwelling unit--in which he resides, the smaller the chance that even these playmates will be intimate or have much in common with either his parents, siblings, or his schoolday pals. His mother will, in a home which has become so exclusively a consuming center, perform the focal tasks. And although these tasks are largely concerned with the preparation of goods and services for family consumption, they comprise, in our culture, a large proportion of her

productive roles.[4] However, even mothers, in the city, are becoming more and more likely to work outside their homes for twenty or thirty hours a week, thus sharply reducing their availability and probably--understandably--depleting their patience and enthusiasm for the maternal and domestic segments of their role responsibilities. Our city mother is thus becoming less an exchequer of intimate family information and more a common fellow-dweller. In any case, she is hardly an adequate producer-role model for her son. Family evening life should provide models and opportunities for learning fundamental consumer role behaviors and expectancies; but even here the picture is rather bleak for our city boy. Again, dad must travel quite far through rush hour traffic from his job; and when he arrives at home--long after the children have returned from school--he is tired and often easily irritable. He might abandon his cares to play with his adored heir; but most often--perhaps always--he does not. He might chat with his family or attempt to share each the other's cares and joys of the day; but conversations are frequently limited to "Stop fighting!" or "Turn that TV down!" hurled around the edge of a shielding evening newspaper. Dinner- or supper-time may afford an opportunity for value-integrating--even endearing--exchanges of feeling and information. But here, again, it is often disjointed by the children's hunger to eat soon after arrival from school, and

[4] The persistance of mothers' productive "homemaker" roles--despite vast erosions by household automation and "working outside," may lead us to observe, at this point, that had our city-country contrast been drawn for a little girl instead of a boy, we might be led to estimate that producer-model deprivation has not proceeded to nearly the extent for females that it has for males in our culture; and that women will consequently be far more likely than men to develop realistic self-concepts, well-integrated personalities, and the stability and independence which should flow from these invaluable assets. A fallacy in this estimate might be, however, that such strength and potential for dominance in a sex role pattern whose generally accepted definition remains one of relative weakness and dependence might, in itself, produce intolerable personal conflicts. Recent family research by Blood and Wolfe (Blood, R. O. and Wolfe, D. M.: Husbands and Wives -- The Dynamics of Married Living Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1960.), in fact, suggests the validity of this qualification except for sub-cultural groups, such as many American Negro families, in which a matriarchal organization is traditional.

father's and/or mother's later arrival. Beyond all these urban alienations, the very separation of the interests and involvements of each of the family's members--of the very worlds in which their lives are chiefly lived--conspires against the sharing of profoundly intimate conversational exchanges simply by eliminating the sharing and accumulation of attitudinal and ideological backlogs or premises for such exchanges. In this way, even the relatively few opportunities which do exist for urban families to converse may tend to be unsatisfying and may lead only inefficiently to intimate mutual understandings. Efficient, need-gratifying communication in families--as anywhere else--is a function of profound mutual understandings of each others' goals and values; and these mutual understandings, in turn, can be earned only through a long history of past inter-communication.[5]

This comparison is not made to show that all rural families are warm, close-knit, and educationally versatile; or that all urban families are cool, loose-knit, and educationally sterile; only that their ecological situations generate forces which powerfully condition them in these directions. Barker[6] and Wright[7], from their studies of "psychological ecology" in a small rural town, further illuminate this contrast by means of their "Acts to Performers (A/P) Ratio:" The fundamental role behaviors or "acts" required to sustain community life in our culture--pertinent to fire protection, road construction, water and sewage service, automotive maintenance, mass communications, commerce, building, and legal organization, for a few examples--are relatively fixed, except for proliferations of minor details, and do not vary greatly from

[5] Jensen, G. and Parsons, T. S.: "A Model for Analyzing Small Group Properties Pertinent to Planned Change." in: Bennis, W., Benne, K., and Chin, R. (eds.): The Planning of Change, Readings in the Applied Behavioral Sciences. New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1961, P. 291.

[6] Barker, R.: "The Natural History of Children's Behavior in Midwest, U. S. A." Presidential address of Division 7, American Psychological Association, Cleveland 1953.

[7] Barker, R. and Wright, H.: Midwest and its Children. Evanston: Row, Peterson & Co., 1954.

Chicago or Minneapolis to the smallest southern or midwestern farm communities. The skills necessary to man these fixed essential roles are scarce in a tiny population, so that each resident is needed by his neighbors, and must usually develop a multiplicity of producer roles, in order to maintain the very life of the community. Thus, ". . . the Acts/Performers Ratio is high in Midwest (a rural Kansas town of 750 persons) -- undoubtedly higher than in Cleveland or New York. New York has ten thousand times more Performers than Midwest, but it . . . has only a few hundred times more Acts."[8] The rural barber or storekeeper, therefore, is far more likely than his city counterpart to have also learned and practiced competencies as a carpenter, road repairman, law enforcement officer, fireman, well driller, preacher, jurist or justice, house painter, musician or entertainer, scoutmaster, etc., etc., thus belying the adage that "life is richer and more exciting in the big city." Furthermore, the rural man--and his sons who grow up participating directly with him in his versatile competencies--can hardly escape the security to be derived from knowing that their economic contributions are needed by their fellow citizens and are therefore affectionately appreciated.

III. The Schools' Effect on the Familial Educative Responsibility

It is for these reasons, then--the profound interpersonal estrangement inherent in modern urban patterns of family living, and the great proportional increase of urban families in our culture--that we've come to forget that families are still, and must remain, the fundamental and primary agents of education in our society. Even when we haven't forgotten, we are almost too awed to admit it openly in the face of our schools' formidable formalization and implicit exclusion of direct family cooperation. The massive institutionalization of our educational machinery has brought with it rich fruits in the development of professional standards of training and technical performance. But along with this fruition, which could be achieved only as professional education became a supra-community, scientifically guided bureaucracy, there have negligently been allowed to prosper rank weeds of alienation between the agents of this growing technology of education and the local family-patrons who were

[8] Op. Cit. Barker, 1953.

formal education's historic source and remain its current consumers and supporters. Contemporary institutionalized education--especially in the lonely crowds of our great metropolitan centers--has lost much of its former meaningful contact with the personal goals and interests of its clients. Thus shielded from the integrated wholeness of its students' and their families' social and occupational aims-- the propellors behind their careers--our schools have "logically" (and conveniently) departmentalized their curriculi into discrete, unarticulated bits and pieces of apparently aimless knowledge--"subjects"--whose broad cultural and personal meanings are frequently lost in the boredom of unrealistic, coercive drills, exercises, and standard assignments. They thus leave the hapless student--to whom, in many other matters, they are unwilling to attribute the foresight and self-reliance to take responsibility for his own education--the enormous, solitary task of fitting these pieces together to solve the jig-saw puzzle of a fulfilling, productive adjustment to our complex culture. Occasionally, they're willing to provide him the assistance of a "guidance counselor." But even this gesture is usually made toward the terminal end of his formal education--and often only to those who show signs of having already given up the lonely struggle in disgust, fright, resentment, or sheer resignation. Sometimes a student and his family encounter an individual teacher who articulates his professional efforts with the broad community resources which have always been available to the teaching function. But even this fortunate circumstance rarely occurs where a social class differential impedes communication between teacher and clients; and it is far more often than not a consequence of that schoolteacher's unusual grasp of the essential purposes of education, or sheer respect for his clients' personal integrity, rather than his manifestation of any administratively authorized policy. Indeed, such a teacher is likely to be a person of exceptional courage and stalwart convictions who often finds it necessary to brave the resentment of his colleagues and superiors in order to carry out his professional intentions. Thus,much of contemporary formal education has come to be a ritualistic reiteration of separately packaged sets

of "correct answers" rather than a welcome assistance to learners and their families who wish to prepare themselves to derive maximum satisfaction from contributing their most constructive abilities to their communities. Ultimately, this amounts to a dehumanizing process in which the school inevitably becomes its own major victim. Many of its teachers virtually come to be perceived as "walking correct answers" rather than as the responsible, creative professionals they are capable of being. The only responses their students can make with complete impunity are "correct answers." Honestly ignorant queries, differences of opinion, unorthodox analyses, or revealing wrong answers--which are so necessary and appropriate to any effective teaching-learning interaction--soon become anathemas to students who wish to excel in their teachers', parents', or even their own eyes--or who wish just to avoid trouble. No wonder our time has been called the age of apathy, of the conformist, of the "organization man," or "the era of the good guy." Our educational system is inadvertently, but systematically, conditioning us from childhood to believe that it's punishable to air a sincerely held--but unpopular--opinion: that the gratification one derives, the integrity one preserves, by expressing one's beliefs is not worth the reproach one might receive if the belief should turn out to be "wrong" for present company. So we learn to reserve our untried opinions on live issues--<u>especially</u> our strong opinions--until, through disuse and atrophy, they become habitually displaced by innocuous small talk such as the increasingly stylish club house gossip, water cooler wit, weather wisdom, or major league pennant prognostications. Even the latter may prove too dangerous to risk in some quarters! As Erich Fromm has put it, in examining the process by which humane German citizens rendered themselves unable to oppose the developing Nazi horror, our children are systematically being taught to so guard their "freedom from . . ." (ostracism, chastisement, ridicule, etc.) that they will readily sacrifice their "freedom to . . ." (create, express, manifest their own beliefs, etc.) in

order to secure and protect it.[9] Such training might be appropriate for the docile occupants of an Orwellian workers' paradise; but it points straight toward doom in a democratic nation whose very survival as such depends ultimately upon its electors' discussed, informed, responsible opinions on every mutually important issue.

It is, unfortunately, an open trade-secret among many school personnel that community-wide parental involvement ("bungling") in the delicate watch-works of school education--the curriculum and its administration--is a threatening spectre. And such it has proven to be in the Englewoods and Pasadenas in which it has finally exploded through a barrier of defensive reticence. Such it might prove to be in the many communities in which even parent-teacher organizations are used by apprehensive school people as pink-tea diverters and frustrators of earnest parental concerns rather than as legitimate vehicles for the sharing of the schools' and their patron-families' mutual loving interest in their children's growth and education. Relatively few schools--and far fewer city school systems --have delivered themselves from their fears of disinheritance by re-discovering that parents' omnipresent love for their children will eagerly extend to embrace the school which simply permits them to understand that it shares many of their most cherished hopes for their boys and girls, and earnestly desires their co-operation in expertly achieving them.[10]

IV. The Dilemma of Contemporary Education

Nevertheless, even where these primary social units--families--do not still provide the prototypical models and practice for the skills and other behaviors which are ultimately learned, they at least generate the goals and values toward which all subsequent learnings are aimed. The recent urban

[9] Fromm, E.: Escape from Freedom. New York: Rinehart & Co., 1941, pp. 3-39. This thesis is elaborated and given uncomfortable local reference in: The Sane Society. New York: Rinehart & Co., 1955.

[10] Snyder, E. (ed.): The Self-Contained Classroom. Washington, D. C.: A. S. C. D., The National Education Association, 1961.

weakening of familial bonds, discussed above, does not eliminate this process; it merely introduces diffusion and pathology into its functioning. Study of the child socialization process is showing us with increasing clarity that the family or primary group provides at once the basic models and prototypical reinforcing agents for nearly all of our subsequent acts--both those consistent and inconsistent with the family's values--for the rest of our lives. Individuals may emulate, outdo, resist, or overcome their families' value systems; but in each case they must always refer to them--they can never escape them. It seems obvious, therefore, that without families' continued performance of their primary educative roles our schools would have little, indeed,to work with--and even less that would work.

Here, then, appears the key educational dilemma of our age: the primary educative agency of our (or any) culture is being spuriously disinherited of the unique and seminal roles it, alone, can perform to ensure that culture's continued regeneration. Probable symptoms of this erosion are already in sight--some amply documented, others conjectured: Examples might include the recent, redundantly cited surges of youthful divorce rates, juvenile crimes (especially those manifesting "irrational" thrill brutality and rebellion), and other evidences of mounting difficulties in the transmission of values across a widening gulf of alienation between parents and their children. Additional examples might be seen in the much discussed (presumed) erosion of younger employees' constructive work attitudes-- of their "pride in achievement" or "sense of accomplishment;" also in "community apathy," neighborhood uncohesiveness, or the unwillingness to help one's neighbors just because they <u>are</u> one's neighbors. If more and more young people are missing their opportunities <u>en famille</u> to learn "the joy of a job well done," or "the inner glow that comes from giving of oneself," they cannot acquire them by genetic maturation or osmosis. And certainly the schools, alone, are patently incapable of this kind of "guidance." Perhaps it seems far-fetched to implicate a national catastrophe such as the unprecedentedly high rates of death, defection, "give-up-itis," and "playing it cool" sustained by American

military captives of the Communist Chinese during the recent Korean conflict;[11, 12] but official conclusions of the U. S. Department of Defense's exhaustive studies of these men have done exactly that--and then generalized this implication to millions of additional young Americans whom the captured Korean veterans may well represent. It's true that in their so-called "brainwashing" or motor-emotional indoctrination, these men suffered an unprecedented assault upon their integrity. But integrity, emotional stability, ego-strength, self-confidence, or a clear, unshifting concept of one's <u>self</u> all require firm ideological and attitudinal rooting in four chronological directions: fore, aft, and sideways. Our urbane youngsters' uninitiated disdain for the "corny" personal meanings their elders frequently derived from "the life hereafter," or "our nation's (or culture's) glorious history," left only contemporary peer and familial roots for the Communists to dislodge in order to--literally--uproot these "sophisticated" young Americans' personalities. Their enforced self-criticism, total exclusion of all but disheartening mail from home, and suspicion-breeding informer system--all designed to wedge apart primary and contemporary interpersonal relationship--accomplished this with astonishing effectiveness for many young Americans. Once our young men could be thus rendered alone and helpless, while surrounded by a hutful of their "buddies" (perhaps completing, for many of them, a process that had begun in their stateside homes and schoolrooms), an alarming number of them retained nothing else, spiritually or ideologically, to live for. Like Spitz' maternally deprived <u>foundlings,</u>[13] Bettelheim's culturally extirpated inmates of Dachau and Buchenwald,[14]

[11] Bauer, R. A. and Schein, E. H. (issue editors): "Brainwashing," <u>The Journal of Social Issues.</u> Vol. 13, Ann Arbor: 1957, all of issue no. 3.

[12] Kinkead, E.: <u>In Every War But One.</u> New York: W. W. Norton, 1959.

[13] Spitz, R. A.: "Hospitalism," <u>The Psycho-Analytic Study of the Child.</u> Vol. 1, New York: 1945, pp. 53-72. Also: "Hospitalism, A Follow-up Report," <u>The Psycho-Analytic Study of the Child.</u> Vol. 2, New York: 1946, pp. 113-117.

[14] Bettelheim, B.: "Individual and Mass Behavior in Extreme Situations." In Maccoby, E. E., Newcomb, T. M., and Hartley, E. L., <u>Readings in Social Psychology,</u> third edition. New York: Holt, 1958. Reported more fully in <u>Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology,</u> 1943, 38, 417-452.

and some of the infants and children displaced during the London Blitz, they consequently began to perish: first, psychologically, and then, quite often, physically. They literally "couldn't care less" about far too many things! In announcing the Defense Department's desperate Character Training Program--a remedial project which has displaced a sizable segment of the military services' previous technical training courses--former President Eisenhower and members of the Program's authoring committee reported that the nation's military forces need more, not less, expert technicians than ever before; but that they must first have mature, self-confident men, and feel they are no longer getting them. Military age is, of course, much too late to do this training job efficiently or, probably, at all. It is being attempted at such great cost only because it is necessary, and because the proper settings--homes, with the help of schools and churches--somehow appear to be performing dangerously below their customary levels of effectiveness.

If it can be fairly assumed that these and many other examples do demonstrate the "key educational dilemma" indicated above--families' unremitting disinheritance of educative or culturally regenerative roles which they, alone, can play--then very seriously in the interest of national and cultural security we have no choice but to re-examine the essential functions of education in our society and to re-appraise the main agencies to which these functions are now committed. Only then may we attempt to conclude whether our dilemma is inevitably hopeless or is capable of some feasible solution.

V. Loci of the Teaching Function

Certainly "teaching," "learning," and the "communication" of ideas and attitudes represent functions which must be considered central to any adequate conception of educational processes. Professional educators have probably always been aware--whether they have manifested the awareness or not--that all teaching does not go on in school; that perhaps it is more valid and useful to speak of the teaching-learning process, or of the teaching function, than to single out the role of "the teacher" for the sole or main focus of

educative dynamics. Schematically, and in terms of some fundamental conditions of life in our culture, it might be even more specifically useful to conceptualize at least four major loci of this teaching function: the learner, himself; his peer associates; his parents or other (family) models; and his professional schoolteacher. Each of these loci or positions of the teaching function is essential in some proportion to the efficiency of the teaching-learning process for an individual learner in school; and none of them, when they are available, can be ignored without placing the entire process in jeopardy.

a. The Learner, Himself. Although referring to a learner as his own teacher may violate generally accepted syntactical usages of "learning" and "teaching," every schoolteacher knows that, regardless of his I. Q. or the cultural richness of his home, the reluctant learner is a relatively slow (or non-) learner of school subjects, while the enthusiastic learner is, other things equal, a more gratifyingly rapid achiever. This does not mean that there can be any conditions under which a very intelligent child is not learning some things very rapidly; but, like the thirsty horse which has been dragged to water, the otherwise curious child may find only his schoolteachers' brands of learnings unpalatable. A person can, in a sense, be taught; but to speak of "learning a person something" makes veridical as well as grammatical nonsense. However it ultimately comes to be understood, learning is bound to remain an internal, personal process which requires the learner's own deliberate participation to occur in any significant or systematic way. Recent studies have shown this to be true even for machine teaching[15] and brainwashing;[16] and the current complaints about rampant underachievement in our schools--associated with student resistance, boredom, and a frighteningly wasteful early drop-out rate--can probably best be understood as a function of too much compulsion or restriction, and too little attraction of learners' active, wilful co-operation in the teaching of themselves. In the educative enterprise of a democratic society, perhaps the first lesson a child should learn about

[15] Glaser, R. (ed.): Training Research and Education. Pittsburgh: The University Press, 1962.

[16] Op. cit. Bauer, R. A. and Schein, E. H.

learning is his own very real responsibility for its occurrence. Being told this when he is in the first or sixth grade or junior high is less than not enough; such an injunction then resembles the galling of the horse's bit. Rather, the curriculum must give him repeated opportunities to experience its personal advantages for him from the time of his first encounter with (formal) education and ever thereafter.

b. Peers. A chorus of "horrors!" can be heard from many schoolteachers and administrators whenever one suggests the organized utilization of classmates--or at least the recognition of classmates' utility--as active, personally involved planners and initiators of curricular events for their peers. Yet who, from his own experiences, could deny the educative efficacy of peer tutelage for learning bike riding; tree climbing; social dancing, conversational style, and manners? . . . personal grooming and clothing? . . . most athletic skills and appreciations? . . . even some vocational skills and attitudes? For how many persons are their understanding of, say, current history; geography or politics; their practical grasp of, perhaps, certain mathematical processes; physical functions; or biological phenomena given their conclusive resolution through friendly inter-personal exchanges? In many schools where the professional staffs might be least willing to concede the sanity of allowing classmembers any responsibilities for curricular planning or administration it is, in fact, a matter of great public concern that these same classmembers can demonstrate an adeptness in teaching such street-curricular arts as jackrolling, filching, lock picking, and hot-rod mechanics which patently puts their schoolrooms' instructional efficiency to shame! Our contemporary understanding of learning-group functions makes it anachronistic for us to continue to argue--or behave--as though the schoolteacher is at all times, on all topics, and for all students in a position to be of the greatest educative assistance. A 1959 review[17] of six preceding years of research on the structure and dynamics

[17] Jensen, G. and Parsons, T. S.: "The Structure and Dynamics of Classroom Groups and Educational Systems." In Review of Educational Research, 29, 4. A. E. R. A., October, 1959.

of classroom groups and educational systems renders a "water-and-dry-sponge" conception of the teaching-learning process completely untenable if it had not been considered so, before. Children--or learners of any age--have incomparably more motivational potential for each other than can be exerted by variations in room lighting, audio-visual techniques, book type or size, phrasing of problems, or any of the solely administration- or teacher-managed incidentals in which we've sought motivational potential in the past.[18] Until we can propagate the existing ways and design new ways of applying this vast reservoir of social motivational potential to central curricular processes and teaching-learning functions, we will continue to teach best of all that Education is distasteful and to be avoided whenever possible; that most schoolteachers are queer, sub-human beings who must be deferred to in school, but otherwise not taken seriously; that the pre-packaged Subjects and deadweight Exercises many of them purvey have no clear connection to the real affairs of life; and that one's enjoyment of, and reputation among, one's peers can in no way be affected by a schoolteacher's expressions--unless one is unfortunate enough to become a "teacher's pet."[19] Admittedly, these are strong statements; but the redundancy of their central theme in popular jokesters' patter, contemporary books, articles, and a wide variety of the media of public commentary assures us that for many people the reality appears as strong as the statement. Essential to the proper functioning of a social and political democracy is its citizens' understanding that the ultimate responsibility for all acts and decisions of their government rests, no matter how indirectly, upon each of their shoulders--and consciences. From this fundamental distinction we derive much of our feeling of being uniquely free "free men." Despite its awesome rigors and some consequent backsliding, therefore, our striving toward the

[18] Parrish, L. and Waskin, Y.: Teacher-Pupil Planning. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1958.

[19] Cf. Sally Carrighar's frightening account of some particularly creative "teachers' pets" attitudes toward their schoolteachers in "Murder in the Schoolroom," Harpers Magazine, June 1957; Vol. 214, no. 1285. Whether or not one questions her remedy, her diagnosis of some of Education's professional ills gives cause for grave concern.

attraction of feeling ultimately responsible for our own actions is undeniable. To frustrate this striving invites ugliness and resistance. To experience similar feelings toward the full acceptance of shared responsibility for mutual goals and actions is probably our next great step in the realization of our national ideals. Nevertheless, a truly perceptive educational enterprise in a vital, evolving modern democracy must ultimately make itself compatible with the notion that it is not only permissible but appropriate for each of us: schoolteacher, parent, or student, to take real responsibility for assisting fellow classmembers toward the corporate achievement of learning-goals or objectives which we all have individually accepted and thus share. Lacking such an aim, it is possible that in this current era of international competition--perhaps for personal and national survival--we are egregiously wasting (or "educating") away our most precious and indigenous natural resource: our citizens' uniquely democratic capacity to assume affectionate personal responsibility for the welfare of their compatriots as well as for themselves.

c. Parents. A case for the formal recognition and utilization of parents as proper agents of the teaching function would be redundant, here. At this point it should appear obvious that until many more parents than at present are explicitly acquainted with their unique opportunities for co-operation in the teaching-learning process--and are actively involved, with professional leadership, in the dynamics of curriculum planning and instruction --the public-owned educative machinery of this nation must continue to get the low mileage which has earned criticism, in recent years, from an astonishing variety of citizens including presidents, parents, politicians, and even many professionals, themselves. By deliberately or inadvertently contributing, in the ways described above, to parents' resignation from their exclusive, primary roles in the education of their children, professional educators are simply assuring their own ultimate disinheritance. Evidence of this is apparent to anyone who has studied the recent surge of school systems' failures to secure adequate public financing for their projected--even current--plant and operational requirements. One of the greatest wastes

in contemporary American education--as destructive of its aims as the squandering of peer interrelationships discussed in the preceding paragraph --is our schools' almost dedicated abdication from the position of enormous social influence to which its most essential functions nevertheless guarantee it constant access. Only our schools and their personnel, among all the institutions and professional groups in our society, have the opportunity to establish a personal, meaningful contact--hopefully, an affectionate, devoted relationship--with every human life. The public responsibility with which the school is explicitly charged is that it stimulate culturally regenerative attitudinal and intellectual development--change--in its clients; and the time it is given in which to accomplish this purpose vastly exceeds that permitted any other organized institution for the accomplishment of its purposes. Furthermore, the personal needs professional educators are asked to fulfill are wider in scope, more intimate, more popularly valued, and more instrumental to the most cherished aspirations of their clients than are those serviced by any other profession save possibly medicine. And the primary clients, themselves: the students, are universally the most precious, prideful assets of their own families and of their home communities. If the major prerequisite for being invested with social power and leadership is being perceived as regularly and uniquely capable of fulfilling highly valued needs,[20] then contemporary educators must either be failing their purposes rather completely, or expending ingenuity and effort to evade the normal consequences of their services. The social status and recompense of schoolteachers in most communities attests to the likelihood of either or both of these alternatives. It is, nevertheless, clear that the most important things most schools want very earnestly and affectionately to do for their pupils are identical to the most important things most parents earnestly and lovingly want to have done for their children. These poignant needs, if brought into sharp focus and explicitly shared by the school and its patrons, would surely bear at least as much potential for sustained, co-operative

[20] Bass, B.: Leadership, Psychology, and Organizational Behavior. New York: Harper Brothers, 1960. Pp. 89-105.

community enthusiasm as the community chest, high school football, local politics, or even big league baseball. Perhaps the monolithic School now appears as alien territory to most of the families it serves. Its "cordiality" is often antiseptic; and its requests for individual parents' assistance are frequently based upon their children's "failures" or misdeeds. But if those agents of the school who are in a position to bring the most valuable information to families: the individual teachers of their children, could find ways to communicate directly and convincingly to parents that the active cooperation of each of them is needed in the processes of educating their own children and their children's classmates, it is inconceivable that the requested help, and more, would not be made enthusiastically available. The very few schools and classrooms in which such an approach has been tried[21] have borne out this prediction with consistency and often astonishing success; but the vast majority of schools seem engaged in a massive conspiracy either to ignore the basic fact that children have loving parents (who strive for whatever they understand is the best available for them) or to apply the ingenuity mentioned

[21] Two "under-achieving" elementary schools in culturally deprived neighborhoods of Flint, Michigan, are currently undergoing experimental treatment in a study which has solicited the active, daily investment of parents' effort in their children's reading instruction. Preliminary analyses of initial data by Dr. Mildred Smith indicate that these parents (including illiterates!) have been virtually unanimous in welcoming this unusual encroachment upon their domestic "freedom", have carried out their "homework" with over 95% dependability, and have thereby provided such improved scholastic models and learning opportunities for their children that as an apparent result the average grade placement in reading for both schools has leaped almost two years over control schools within a single semester. A superb example of parents' broad, intensive involvement in the planning of curriculum and execution of instruction for their children is to be found in the Webster Elementary School in Pontiac, Michigan. Here, "self-contained" classrooms, in which teachers remain with their pupils for two or three years, have truly become--and are called--"Room Families" because of the profound, continuous involvement of pupils' families in their educative activities. These rooms have virtually become psychological extensions of the patron families' homes. This program, which has been under continuous development by the co-operating parents, pupils, and teachers since 1946, is also in various stages of development in several other Pontiac elementary and junior high schools, some of whose principals served an apprenticeship as teachers in Webster School. A report of this program and its outstanding scholastic and community development achievements appears in Snyder, E.: An Evaluative Study of a Developmental Elementary School Program. Unpublished Ed. D. thesis, Wayne State University, 1957.

above to tactics designed to evade parents' earnest concerns for their children's progress. School-family interaction has thus, perversely, dwindled to a trickle; and the techniques used to keep it that way range from the socially sterile "report card" method of "grading" and reporting pupil progress to (ironically) the all-too-prevalent "pink-tea-and-guest-speaker" variety of parent-teacher organization mentioned earlier.

d. The Schoolteacher. Finally, the schoolteacher has not lost his importance in this analytical view of the teaching function. Rather, by sharing his role he has magnified it. Perhaps the teaching function can be meaningfully analogized to Shakespeare's "mercy," whose . . . . quality . . . is not strain'd . . . ," and which (if it isn't sluiced off, dammed up, and dripped down through a single institutional nozzle) "droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven."[22] The experiences of schools in which the teaching function is shared in somewhat the manner envisioned here[23] does, in fact, suggest that when parents interact closely and meaningfully with schoolteachers in co-operative efforts toward their children's education; when peers mutually support and assist (rather than deprecate) each others' academic achievement; and when pupils are permitted to find themselves both challenged and rewarded by their growing scholastic interests, the schoolteachers' roles--thus intimately observed--rise markedly in prestige and socially reputed value. Teachers in this situation find that parents, pupils, and peers who may formerly have been sources of resistance and frustration become allies. And having acquired allies so powerfully influential with each other and within their local community, they find new freedom to perceive and respond to the individual needs and queries of all their clients. They find themselves in a position to seek and apply a broad range of attractive community resources to these needs, and less addicted, therefore, to coercive motivational attempts and the punitive disciplinary measures which are their inevitable consequences. Thus, they become co-ordinators of the teaching-learning

[22] Shakespeare, W.: "The Merchant of Venice," Act IV, Scene I. In The Comedies and Tragedies of Shakespeare, Vol. 2, New York: Random House, 1944, p. 603.

[23] Cf. Smith, M.; op. cit. Also, Snyder, E.; op. cit.

process for their clienteles: designers and organizers of sequential instructional episodes in which all members of their teaching-learning teams (parents, peers, and the pupil, himself, as well as the schoolteacher) bear inter-dependent, mutually supporting responsibilities for each student's curricular achievement.

VI. The Restoration of Education to Community Life

So far, we have outlined some economic, demographic, ecological, and socio-psychological conditions which have fundamentally governed the development, and now constrain the freedom, of the educative function in American culture. In doing so, we have confronted some grave problems in home-school-community relations which appear to demand solution for the sake of our cultural integrity --perhaps, our national survival. We have cited our history of burgeoning metropolitanization; we have attempted to demonstrate the growing massive alienation of familial and other supportive social relationships, which has been a major consequence of this historic trend; and we have focused particular inquiry into many parents', peers', and learners' debilitating surrender of their exclusive responsibilities for the education that is required to continuously regenerate our national and cultural integrity. We have called this resignation, and its consequences, the key educational dilemma of our age. While lauding contemporary institutionalized education for its growth in scientific sophistication, we have mourned its loss of sympathetic communication with its supporters and patrons, and its consequent loss of meaningful contact with the personal aims and interests of its clients.

Nevertheless, we recognize that our locally controlled common-school design for public education, though burdened throughout much of our history with the widest possible cultural and lingual diversity, has performed a monumental service in assisting us toward the shared values, the compatible skills and understandings--in sum, the national culture--which we enjoy, today. We would not, and probably could not, fundamentally alter it. But we also recognize that to continue its contribution to a rapidly evolving culture, institutionalized education must continously adjust to the changing needs and conditions of life of its patrons.

The prime pre-requisite for any such adjustments in American society must be the restoration of continuous, meaningful inter-communication, along as many social channels as possible, between schools, their client-families, and their proprietary communities. No other course is consistent with our historic ideal of shared public responsibility for public education.

Classrooms, schools, and school systems which are thus attempting to realize the American ideal in today's urban settings have generally pursued more effective communication and co-operation among home, school, and community via one or both of two main routes: the promotion of attractive programs of extra-curricular activities for patron families; and the deliberate use of the day school curriculum to invite client families'(and their friends') responsible interest and personal involvement in the processes of educating their own and their neighbors' children. Certainly in our nation there are many schoolteachers and school administrators who share the philosophy and in various ways implement the programming of home-school-community relations discussed here. But among large metropolitan systems the prototypical Flint Public Schools and its pioneering Mott Program,[24] along with the more recent Detroit Great Cities Program for School Improvement, are undoubtedly national showcases for, predominantly, the extra-curricular programs route to broad community-school involvement. The Webster School[25] and several of its sister elementary schools in Pontiac, Michigan, and the Higher Horizons schools of New York City, are probably our most outstanding examples of, primarily, the parent-teacher or curricular involvement route. Both of these routes are designed, first, to familiarize patron families with the staffs, purposes, procedures, facilities, problems, and potentialities of their schools; and then, to stimulate their mutual interest and responsible involvement in the identification, analysis, and satisfaction of a wide variety of significant personal and community needs. Such schools become community property in no restricted sense. Their doors, rooms, and facilities are open at all hours of

[24] Clancy, P. M. and Gabrielson, M. A. (issue editors): "A Report of the First National Community School Clinic," The Journal of Educational Sociology. Vol. 23, New York: Dec., 1959, all of issue No. 4.

[25] Cf. Snyder, E. (ed.): The Self-Contained Classroom, op. cit.: Note particularly "The Self-Contained Unit in Action in the Elementary School," pp. 41-64.

all days and evenings to all community groups for any educative, recreational, or problem-solving purposes. Their plants are used to maximum capacity throughout the year, and their faculties stand always ready to assist citizens in the attainment of personal and community goals which only need to be expressed to be legitimatized. Their post-curricular participants of all ages usually number far greater than their day-school enrollment. Their prime purpose of training youth is given a powerful boost, not diluted, by children's recognition that the building in which they study during the day is the center of the most important happenings in their neighborhood--the site of enthusiastic evening, weekend, and summertime visits with their parents and friends. And learning is often made exciting by the ease of its reinforcement from the exciting community affairs which gravitate toward, rather than by-pass, the school. Students thus appear to gain more understanding of more things; more intelligent integration and balance among these "things;" more intense, spontaneous, and durable interest in learning; and, ultimately, greater self-confidence in, personal responsibility for, and detailed control over the resulting knowledge, values, and attitudes. By actively seeking educative experiences and resources in the world just around them, these schools come to involve the whole neighboring district in their programs. They gradually become round-the-clock centers for interaction and discussion, and thereby spawn mature civil leadership at all age levels.[26] This is a far cry from the abiently motivating "dull dungeon of drudgery" image of less attractive schools--often inadvertently bequeathed by parents who are very pleased to have graduated from them. The expense of operating such an expanded educative program is, of course, increased. But so, vastly, are the popular services rendered; and so, significantly, is the efficiency of maintaining the existing plant. Reliable audits of an entire metropolitan school system operated on this basis indicate that the average additional cost per taxpayer comes to about the price of a package of cigarettes a day; and the voters of this particular city, which manufactures a high percentage of the nation's automobiles, have affirmatively answered their school board's financial requests with overwhelming

[26] Cf. Smith, M. and Snyder, E.; op. cit.

majorities throughout the entire post-war era--including the particularly virulent auto industry depression of c. 1958--during which public mal-support of education has been one of our nation's chief maladies.

Here, we might say, is education's answer to the "do-it-yourself" movement. But since education, community or personal, has always been, essentially, a do-it-yourself movement, the catch-phrase may here be used to describe a restoration of integrity, efficiency, and dignity; not as a term of disparagement. And the term "restoration" is also used deliberately; for although this conception of the functions of formal education, the roles of school personnel, and the community partnership of schools and families hardly describes the current scene in most of our cities, it is anything but alien or revolutionary. Rather, as our discussions earlier in this paper have attempted to indicate, it represents perhaps the only feasible way in which we can restore meaningful personal responsibility for education to our nuturing nuclear families who have lost it, or are confused by it; but who, in our society, must nevertheless be its ultimate possessors.

Our thesis is well summarized by Dr. Charles Stewart Mott, an eminently successful American industrialist who for the past thirty years has increasingly devoted his interest and abilities to problems of American education and community life:

"How do we get people to work together voluntarily and co-operatively toward constructive goals in a community? The answer is that we do it primarily by education and by the engineering of agreement rather than by resorting to coercion and compulsion. In short, we employ democratic processes in the local community as well as in the country as a whole, and we do this literally by counting heads instead of cracking them.

"Most of the problems we face locally and nationally arise from differences in thinking and understanding. It is obvious that people cannot work together until they first learn to think together and to develop common understanding and consensus about their problems. This is why education is of such commanding importance in every community--not just for children and adolescents but for adults as well. Indeed, education is the only ethically acceptable

way to get people to think together and work together for the common good. The fact that so little has been accomplished in many communities toward solving their problems is not an indictment of education as such but rather an indication of our failure to use education on the scale and depth that are needed.

". . . The community school, in concept and in practice, is one institution in the locality that has the potential for helping the community solve many of its pervasive and persistent problems. The premise underlying the community school approach to problems common to most communities can be stated in forthright and fundamental terms. It is this: people in a community have the desire and the capacity to cope with their problems; what they lack are the knowledge, understandings, and skills that education can provide. This premise implies that education must not be terminal education but continuing education on a life-long basis.

"That the community school movement will find wider acceptance and implementation in the future seems certain. As this movement grows, both in scale and depth, it will become a more significant factor in the life of a community and its people. It will become increasingly a more effective instrument for solving problems of the community and its people through the quality, variety, and relevance of its programs, activities, and services. It will provide the facilities and the modus operandi whereby people can solve their key problems through their own efforts."[27]

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[27] Mott, C. S.: Excerpts from preface to Manley, F., Reed, B. W., and Burns, R. K.: The Community School in Action. Chicago: Industrial Relations Center, The University of Chicago, 1961.